

BY MOHAMED R. SHETA, JAN LOECHER, AL-HUSSEIN EL-SHENNAWI AND KARIM SHETA

## The R8 and F430 steal the show at Automech 2007

Today is the last day of the AutoMech Akhbar El Yom Motor-Show, which has been attracting visitors for the past 5 days. The AutoMech succeeded this year in attracting a lot of exhibitors displaying their latest models like the AUDI R8 and the Ford Mondeo which plays a main role in the James Bond 007 movie. One week ago we provided you with a preview on what car models our readers would see when visiting the show. Today we will show you in part 1 of our Motor-Show coverage which cars were finally displayed there, some latest news from the motor-show, unique insider-information from behind the scene and of course some surprises in the motor-show. In part 1 of our motor-show coverage we will give you an overall view about the show and highlight some companies in particular. In part 2 and 3 we will introduce to you the other key-players of the AutoMech motor-show and the Egyptian automotive market in detail. In part 2 and 3 we will also talk about the crash test results of some of the cars displayed at the motor-show and about the future of some 'green' and environment-friendly cars in Egypt.



### AUDI R8

The Audi R8 was the unrivaled motor-show highlight and eye-catcher in hall 2. I know a lot

of personal friends who only came to the show to watch the R8. Posing in a black/black color combination (exterior/interior) the R8 not only at-

tracted normal visitors to the AUDI stand but also potential buyers. Rumors are saying that three AUDI R8 were sold to customers during the first two days of the motor-show, including a Bahraini customer who was visiting the motor-show. This means we will soon see the 303-km/h fast R8 cruising down the King Hamad road in Manama as well as the Nile Cornish very soon. One of the unique options of the R8 are the passive lightning system of the engine.

The V8 engine of the R8 uses the advanced FSI technology which you find also in other

models like the sporty Audi A3, the 4-doors A4, the business-class A6, the A5 and S5 Coupe as well as the luxurious A8 and the big Q7 SUV.

The burden on the R8 shoulders is very heavy. The powerful sports car is not only competing in the league of Lamborghini Gallardo, Mercedes SL 65 AMG, Ferrari F430 but at the same time it is trying to out-perform the iconic status of the current Porsche Carrera 911 (model shape 997), a car which has improved over decades and many magnificent models like the legendary 964, the 993 and the 996.

Assisted by a beautiful design, highly efficient technology and an aggressive marketing campaign the Audi R8 is already giving the Porsche Carrera a hard time in several comparison test in foreign magazine in Germany and USA. The same V8 4.2 FSI engine used in the almighty Audi RS4 and the roomy Q7 SUV has been modified to fit into the AUDI Space-Frame aluminum body with the mid-engine chassis of the R8 in order to improve performance and handling.

The central position of the engine is above all a boon to the unique driving dynamics, as it allows for a weight distribution, as on the R8, of 44 percent to the front and 56 percent to the rear.

The Audi R8 sits broad and squat on the road, the strongly accentuated end appearing to flex its muscles like a sprinter ready for the off.

The Porsche-Carrera-nightmare is powered by a 4.2-litre V8 engine which develops 420 horsepower (Porsche Carrera 4S: 355 hp) and some promising 430 Newton-Meter (Porsche Carrera 4S: 400 Nm). The Audi R8 accelerates from 0-100 km/h in 4.6 sec, reaches a top speed of 301 km/h (Porsche Carrera 4S: 288 km/h).

Inside the Porsche 911 you feel it is much narrower than in the Audi R8.

One has to add that the R8 consumes 1 liter more than the Porsche 911 each 100 kilometers. But who will care about that when enjoying the R8 ride.

The price-tag of the AUDI R8 is saying 81,400 Euros (Porsche Carrera: 97,000 Euros).



### AUDI Q7

The Audi Q7 4.2 was the other highlight next to the Audi S5 and the Audi R8 at AutoMech. The 4.2 V8 of the Q7 uses the FSI technology.

Audi is setting the SUV benchmark very high with the top-of-the-line Audi Q7 V12 TDI, which is propelled by the world's most powerful diesel engine. The V12 TDI common-rail Bi-Turbo engine produces some amazing 500hp and some mind-blowing 1000 Newton-meter torque starting at 1750 rpm, which enables the Q7 (remember we are talking here about a 2.5 tons SUV!) to accelerate from zero to 100 km/h in only 5.5 seconds. Seems like we have another Porsche-nightmare here. Top speed is 250 km/h which is limited electronically due to the

fires and the German 'gentleman' agreement between the German car manufacturers whereas the fuel consumption should not exceed 11,9 liters on 100 km according to AUDI. The V12 TDI is based on the AUDI R10 TDI engine which won the famous 24-hours race of Le Mans, allowing Audi to be the first car manufacturer to win the Le Mans race with a diesel engine.

While all Audi Q7 models (3.6 FSI, 4.2 FSI, 3.0 TDI and 4.2 TDI) are available now, the Q7 V12 TDI will be available only in 2008. Only the basic model Q7 3.6 FSI is standard-equipped with a 6-gear manual transmission while all other models come with a tiptronic transmission.

The Q7 was able to out-perform the Mercedes M-Class and the BMW X5 in

several comparison tests before due to the neutral and comfortable suspension setting in addition to the roomy cabin space and the precise handling. Due to the comfortable suspension and the neutral handling I believe that the Q7 could possibly grab a large market share in Egypt, especially as the suspension is not as stiff as in the BMW X5 in addition to having much more space than the Mercedes M-Class which would therefore make it an ideal car for limousine rental and tourism companies.

In addition to that the Audi Q7 could surely be one of the leading SUVs or off-roaders in the Raid 4x4 Egypt, which will take place in October 2007 (for more about the raid click [www.Raid4x4.Egypt.com](http://www.Raid4x4.Egypt.com) or [www.AutoArabia.org](http://www.AutoArabia.org)).



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## AUDI S5

The Audi A5 / S5 just had its Germany launch a few days ago at the Olympiapark in Munich. German top model Heidi Klum's husband soul singer Seal was the star guest at the exclusive VIP launch as AUDI will be sponsoring his world tour this year. After 12 years



finally AUDI decided to produce a sporty coupe. The Audi coupe era started in 1980 when Audi launched the 200-hp Audi Quattro, which soon became one of the most successful rally cars in history especially with the 1987 introduced S1-Pikes Peak version with over 600 hp. The new Audi S5 has almost nothing in common with the old Audi Quattro. While the Audi Quattro had a 2.3-liter engine the new Audi S5 fascinates its drivers with a 4.2 liter engine which develops 354 hp and 440 Nm of torque at 3500 rpm.

Accelerating from 0-100 km/h shouldn't last more than 5.1 seconds. Top speed is again limited electronically to 250 km/h although the standard-equipped Bridgestone Potenza 245/40 R18 tires (front + rear) would surely withstand a much higher top speed. The permanent all-wheel drive allows a very safe maneuvering and handling while 60 % of the power goes to the back wheels, which allows sometimes small drifts on slippery ground.

## Ferrari



Ferrari Egypt was also one of the well-frequented stands at AutoMech due to the amazing



## RANGE ROVER SPORT

When he received a copy of our first MOTORING supplement with the AutoMech preview a few days ago in his office at Mercedes head-quarter in Stuttgart, he decided immediately to travel to Cairo and asked his secretary to book a flight for him. We discussed several issues, among others that Mercedes Benz Egypt missed this great opportunity to exhibit at AutoMech, which

rod Ferrari F430 which was displayed there. Whenever the car owner Sherif El Bouby or Mr. Hany Salem from MTI (Ferrari & Jaguar Egypt) turned on the V8 engine of F430 Spider all AutoMech visitors rushed to the Ferrari stand to listen to the thunder-like sound of the Bella Maccina. Paying a visit to the Ferrari stand was always an interesting matter, as you always run into some of the most interesting and influential men in Egypt.

One of them was business men Nazih Sallam, who entered the Ferrari stand and asked me if this red car is a FIAT. And indeed the red Ferrari is built at the Ferrari factory in Maranello (Modena / Italy), which is part of the FIAT group. Nazih Sallam and his charming wife are Egypt's most famous car collectors. Sallam has three Ferrari cars in his



collection, which also includes several Mercedes models like the SL 190 as well as American cars (Cadillac Fleetwood) and Italian rarities like the FIAT 500. Sallam, who is an extremely friendly and funny car aficionado, invited us to have a look at his collection and drive some of his unique cars.

Another interesting person I also ran into at AutoMech was Hans-Georg Lutz, the former top Mercedes Benz manager at Daim-



was surely one of the best events organized in Egypt so far. He was very diplomatic and didn't want to comment on this unlucky decision of Mercedes Benz Egypt. I'm not as diplomatic as Lutz and I think that somebody should get fired for such a decision. I am sure that the decision makers at the headquarter in Stuttgart (Mercedes Benz) and Auburn Hills (Chrysler & Jeep & Dodge) will surely investigate in this decision of not exhibiting at any automotive shows in Cairo anymore.

At the BMW stand you didn't only see the most expensive cars but also the most expensive spare parts and accessories. But what was even more eye-catching then the new BMW X5 was the BMW Z4 M Coupe with only two rear end exhaust pipes. I always thought that the BMW Z4 M Coupe had four rear end exhaust pipes like the Z4 M Roadster, the BMW M3 or the BMW M5. Well, I am sure that BMW Egypt / Bavarian Auto will give us an explanation soon.

At the Esperanza stand I ran into another interesting and promising person, Eng. Hassan About Fotouh, Managing Director of Abu El Fotouh Daewoo

group who expressed his appreciation for finally reading an independent and professional motoring feature in English here in Egypt. He also mentioned how much he liked the feature



## ESPERANZA

Director of McLaren Racing. Long standing partnerships are largely based on the trust that consumers and car manufacturers put in Mobil 1, an industry recommended by a large number of car manufacturers for its ability to provide enhanced performance and superior engine protection.

Among ExxonMobil's many longstanding partnerships, this year's Automech Exhibition highlights the company's alliance with the Vodafone McLaren Mercedes Formula One team. This partnership focuses on both entities' record of delivering high-quality performance based products that are able to deliver under extreme circumstances.

Adel Hussein, Egypt's Automotive Sales Manager told The Daily Star Egypt, "This partnership also forges a symbolic relationship that captures the best of what each company has to offer. Mobil 1 represents performance, innovation and technology, and McLaren, the best in Formula One Racing."

we did about the 'unique' BMW 316i (E90) in AUTO ARABIA magazine. You will surely read soon more about Hassan About Fotouh's ambition of transforming Esperanza into the most successful Chinese brand in Egypt.

According to Medhat Ismail, Sales and Marketing director at Egyptian Automotive & Trading, the VW Eos is already one of the most successful 4-seater con-

vertibles in Egypt, far ahead of the Renault Megané and the Opel Astra TwinTop.

Opel on the other hand is trying to get more customers to the Opel showrooms through the new Opel Vectra and Opel Astra range, which includes the Opel Astra GTC with the panorama front wind-shield which gives you the impression of driving a convertible but with the comfort and noise-level of a coupe or sedan. Mohamed Zohny, Marketing Manager at Opel Egypt, stated the price of the 3-doors GTC with the convertible-like panorama roof will be priced at 165,000 LE and that there are already six GTC-cars available on stock in Cairo. We test-drove the Opel Astra GTC panorama recently and will publish the test-drive very soon.

The 5-doors Astra costs between 135,000 LE and 150,000 LE (with EasyTronic Automatic transmission), the Astra station with EasyTronic costs 160,000 LE and the Opel Vectra starts at 161,000 LE. The price of the trendy and cool-looking Corsa

was the 2007 Renault F1 racing car, which according to rumors had a real engine and gear-box installed. The other F1 racing car was a Ferrari F1 car which was displayed at the Marlboro stand. On the second day of AutoMech the Ferrari F1 was borrowed outside to be the star of the Marlboro Ferrari party

will be held in Marina (North Coast) at the end of August.

"We are extremely excited about this competition. It will give racing fans and car lovers an opportunity to get behind the wheel of an F1 simulator," said Neal.

"I am also equally excited to continue to work with our Technology Partner Mobil 1, which captures the essence of advanced technology and performance in all they do," he added.

Mobil 1 has a long history of performance and leadership, both in Egypt and around the world. After becoming the first widely available synthetic motor oil in 1974, ExxonMobil has consistently produced top-selling synthetic motor oil. Offering enhanced wear protection, all temperature durability, and improved protection against harmful deposits, Mobil 1 continues to bring drivers vehicle protection and heightened performance.

compact car has not been announced yet. I wonder if the C'Mon marketing campaign of the Corsa will also take place in Cairo.

Amr Iskandarani, Vice President of Hyundai Egypt / Ghabbour is concentrating more on down-to-earth cars like the Hyundai New Accent, the new Hyundai Coupe or the locally assembled Hyundai Sonata with the 2.0 and 2.4 liter engine at his AutoMech stand.

According to El Schazly Mustafa from the Hyundai marketing department the locally assembled Hyundai Sonata will soon be available for press test-drives in Egypt.

Another entry level in Egypt will be opened by the new Renault Logan (known in Europe as Dacia Logan), which will start at 65,000 LE for the 4-doors version. According to Sherif Al Alem, commercial manager at Renault Egypt, the 4-doors Logan will offer air condition, power steering and electric windows at this entry level.

ABS and airbags will understandably not be available at this competitive price. The Logan station version will cost around 100,000 LE. Sherif Al Alem stated that the 1.6 liter engine produces 90 hp and 150 Nm torque at 4000 rpm, using the Euro 3 emission level which enables the use of 90 and 92 octane fuel.

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## VOLKSWAGEN EOS

in Egypt so far by succeeding Nissan expectations. Ahmed Abdel Maksoud, Marketing Executive, confirmed that the Nissan test-drives with the Tiida and X-Trail offered

to the AutoMech visitors were over-booked almost all the time. The Nissan Tiida proved to be the ideal car for the AutoMech shuttle service as it has the largest leg room in its class.

Another interesting test-drive on the AutoMech ground was the Peugeot 407 HDI. Peugeot Egypt / Wagih

even had a small parour which reminded me with the Road Safety & Safe Driving training we organize regularly. There will be another Safety Driving Training organized soon. Dates and locations are listed on www.AutoArabia.org/RoadSafety.

Another all-wheel-drive Japanese model launched at the AutoMech was the Nissan Pathfinder, which completed the Nissan model

range next to the X-Trail, the Tiida and the Sunny. According to Mohamed Gamal El Din, Marketing & Sales Manager at Nissan Egypt, the X-Trail has been very successful

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Renault Logan 1.6 16V	1.6	65,000
Renault Logan 2.0 16V	1.6	100,000
Renault Logan 2.4 16V	1.6	135,000
Renault Logan 2.0 16V	1.6	100,000

BMW spare parts are not cheap. So drive safe and carefully

tor show, although there are many models like the Toyota Prius (of which Toyota sold the number 1,000,000 just a few

weeks ago) or the Lexus LS 600h. On the other hand there was a Citibank and Arab-Bank booth in each hall which shows that the AutoMech is mainly a Business-to-Consumer rather than a Business-to-Business show which might explain why we saw no environment-friendly car at all. I hope Egyptian Minister of Environment Dr. Maged George will attend the Egyptian motor-shows in the future.

So finally, which car is the best car for Egypt?

We will find this out after the Egyptian Car of the Year Award takes place. For more information and voting please click [www.EgyptianCarOfTheYear.com](http://www.EgyptianCarOfTheYear.com) or call 5525 from your mobile.

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We would like to hear from you your comments and suggestions regarding our new Daily Star Egypt & Auto Arabia supplement. Please send us your reader's letter to [readersletter@AutoArabia.org](mailto:readersletter@AutoArabia.org). For advertising in the MOTORING supplement please contact us on [DailyStarEgypt@AutoArabia.org](mailto:DailyStarEgypt@AutoArabia.org), fax +202-3470841 or phone +202-3470840.

# ExxonMobil1 signs five-year agreement with Automech

By Adam N. Makary  
The Daily Star Egypt Staff

CAIRO: ExxonMobil, sponsor of the annual Automech Exhibition for the past three years via its flagship motor oil Mobil 1, has signed an agreement to be the event's sole sponsor for the next five years.

"The sponsorship agreement reflects ExxonMobil's commitment to the exhibition and the auto industry in Egypt, and the special alliance that Mobil 1 enjoys with many of the world's leading car manufacturers, as well as dealers, distributors and service centers," said Jonathan Neale, Managing

Director of McLaren Racing. Long standing partnerships are largely based on the trust that consumers and car manufacturers put in Mobil 1, an industry recommended by a large number of car manufacturers for its ability to provide enhanced performance and superior engine protection.

Among ExxonMobil's many longstanding partnerships, this year's Automech Exhibition highlights the company's alliance with the Vodafone McLaren Mercedes Formula One team. This partnership focuses on both entities' record of delivering high-quality performance based products that are able to deliver under extreme circumstances.

Adel Hussein, Egypt's Automotive Sales Manager told The Daily Star Egypt, "This partnership also forges a symbolic relationship that captures the best of what each company has to offer. Mobil 1 represents performance, innovation and technology, and McLaren, the best in Formula One Racing."

Mobil 1, calling itself the world's leading synthetic motor oil, is launching the "No 1 Champions" Competition, a Formula One racing simulation, where contestants get the chance to test their best lap-time just like Vodafone McLaren Mercedes Racing Team's champion drivers Fernando Alonso and Lewis Hamilton.

The competition, which will give the grand prize winner two tickets for two to the Formula One Race in Bahrain 2008, is being unveiled at this year's Automech Exhibition, the region's premier car show.

The F1 simulator is on display, open for contestants to try their luck behind the wheel from June 6 through June 11 at the Exhibition Grounds in Nasr City.

"We are extremely excited to continue to work with our Technology Partner Mobil 1, which captures the essence of advanced technology and performance in all they do," he added.

Mobil 1 has a long history of performance and leadership, both in Egypt and around the world. After becoming the first widely available synthetic motor oil in 1974, ExxonMobil has consistently produced top-selling synthetic motor oil. Offering enhanced wear protection, all temperature durability, and improved protection against harmful deposits, Mobil 1 continues to bring drivers vehicle protection and heightened performance.

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The F1 simulator attracted the crowds. Even our colleague Al Hussein El Shennawi became addicted to the simulator.



Lebanon